

NOW YOU'RE TALKIN'!

"Power With Words," by Norman Lewis. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1943. 346 pp. \$2

George Barnard Shaw once offered the disheartening observation that "fine art of any sort is either easy or impossible," which leaves those of us who have scant reason for believing that we are geniuses in a rather out-on-the-limb position. But even if the acidulous and bewhiskered philosopher is correct in his assertion—and it is distinctly possible that he isn't—it still does

not follow that we of the non-genius stripe cannot do a little something, by earnest endeavor, to lift ourselves to at least a slightly higher level of mediocrity.

For such purpose—unless, perchance, one's ambition is to become a champion tiddledywinks shooter, where only cuss words are needed—no better tools can be found than words. In her grand book, "The God of the Machine," Isabel Patterson, herself a word juggler of no mean order, notes that "As language is the faculty which distinguishes man from the lower animals, it is also a ready index to the intellectual level of cultures and persons."

Such being the case, if we want to make ourselves more readily distinguished from the lower animals, or just more distinguished, period, we might well have recourse to Norman Lewis' new book "Power With Words." This reviewer, who has sort of a feeling for words, a weakness for putting them together end to end to see what happens, has, man and boy, pored over a good many "word" books. He is not going to be backward about stepping forward to offer a few remarks concerning this Lewis book; it's one of the best, without a doubt.

If you would be a little more effective when you write and when you talk; a little more discerning when you read and when you listen; if you would develop several other skills which, if they won't make you a Shaw or a Patterson, *will* make you a little less of the nonentity you sometimes feel you are, then you will want this book.

—C. O. STEELE